



CALPEEK

CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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CAMPAIGN 2000: LIBERTARIAN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CONVENTION JUNE 29 – JULY 3 IN ANAHEIM.

Editor's note: In addition to the Democrats and Reform Party, the Libertarian Party also will hold its presidential convention in Calif. – at the Anaheim Marriott, June 29th to July 3rd. Here's a brief preview & update...

...The Libertarians may not get the news media exposure of the Reform or Green parties, but for the 3rd presidential election cycle in a row, the Libertarian presidential candidate will be on the ballot in all 50 states. The Libertarian Party was founded in 1971 – and at that time most new Libertarians were unhappy GOPers. Some Libertarians are liberal, while others are more conservative. The party's 1988 presidential nominee was U.S. Rep. Ron Paul of Houston, who left the GOP to run as the Libertarian nominee. Paul had very conservative views. Whatever the case, in down-ballot contests, Demos love it when there's a Libertarian in the race because they tend to pull votes away from GOP candidates – just as Green Party candidates tend to take votes away from Demos...

...Nationally, Libertarians are against taxation; oppose laws against victimless crimes; want to cut bureaucracy at all levels of government; oppose the war on drugs; are very pro-2nd Amendment; and the party platform is pro-choice on the question of abortion. In Calif., the Libertarian Party was strongly against Prop. 26 in the March primary. The best known Libertarian officeholders in Calif. are Mendocino Co. DA Norman L. Vroman and Calaveras Co. Sup. Thomas Tryon. Also well known is San Diego political activist Dick Rider. Here in Calif., there are 87,183 party members (.60% of all voters) and Mark Hinkle is the party chair, while Juan Ros is the LP's executive director. www.ca.lp.org...

...There are 8 Libertarian candidates running for the White House – and 4 of those candidates are from Calif. The leading contender to get the Libertarian nomination at the party's convention in Anaheim is Harry Browne, who also got the nomination in '96. He's the author of 11 books about economics and investments and his views tend to be on the conservative side. In the Calif. primary, Browne led a field of 5

Libertarian challengers, getting 62% of the vote. Kip Lee of Redding, CA, was second with 12%. But since the Calif. primary, several of Browne's challengers have dropped out and Don Gorman has jumped in. Gorman is considered the *dean of elected American Libertarians*. He was elected to the New Hampshire Legislature in 1992 and reelected in '94. If there is going to be a solid challenge to Browne, sources think it will come from Gorman...

...FYI: There will be 1,500 delegates attending the convention in Anaheim. On Saturday, July 1st, the presidential contenders will square off in a debate and actual balloting to select a nominee and VP running mate will occur July 2nd. For a list of the Libertarian candidates go to: www.lp.org. Stay tuned...

THE QUACKENBUSH CHRONICLES: COMMISSIONER "Q" WALKS OUT OF SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING.

Editor's note: Political insiders had been waiting for more than a week in anticipation of CA Insurance Comm. Chuck Quackenbush's appearance before the CA State Senate Insurance Cmt., chaired by State Sen. Jackie Speier (D-San Mateo). Calpeek watched the hearing on *The Calif. Channel* and we were not disappointed. Here is our update and commentary...

...No reason to rehash all the stuff about the foundation set up by Comm. Q as a way to settle up with insurance firms who mishandled claims from policyholders after the 1994 Northridge earthquake. Bottomline: instead of paying billions in fines, the insurance firms paid about \$12 million to one of Q's foundations and he used part of the money to promote himself with tv/psa ads – among other things. The CA Senate Insurance Committee's May 23rd hearing was to probe along these lines...

...But instead of answering questions from the committee, Comm. Q read a prepared statement in which he denied any wrong doing; praised his department for saving consumers millions of dollars; said that Calif. is the hottest insurance market in the U.S.; and then gave a verbal digital salute to committee chair Speier, claiming that this particular hearing

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was akin to a *political ambush*. And then Q said his attorney, Don Heller, advised him not “walk into an ambush.” At that point, Q walked out of the hearing along with a number of DOI deputies, leaving lawmakers *shell shocked*. Speier then called a quick recess to regroup...

...Speier's reply to Q: “I've been ambushed before. This (hearing) was a piece of cake. Comm. Quackenbush is the one who ambushed the committee.” What's next? Senate President John Burton(D) has issued a subpoena to force Q to appear before the panel. But with AG Bill Lockyer(D) investigating Q's actions, the commissioner might end up taking the 5th once the hearing resumes...

...These past weeks haven't been easy for Quackenbush. The *L.A. Time* has again (3rd time) called for Q to resign and now the *Sacramento BEE* (McClatchy chain) and the *San Jose Mercury News* have joined in. And new disclosures about Q's foundation/settlements pop up every few days. As **Cal-peek** noted in our May 15th issue, this hasn't been easy on Legislative GOPers either. They're not pleased with Q's defiant attitude or his response to these allegations. And sources say there are some want Q to resign right now. Nor did Mrs. Chris Quackenbush's May 19th blast at Demos help the situation. She said the Demos were trying to “destroy the GOP's strongest potential candidate for governor.” Almost laughable and as one GOP source told **Calpeek**, “With a wife like that, he doesn't need enemies.”...

...However, just before Comm. Q walked out of the hearing, he dropped a *stink* bomb on Speier and the Demos. It's a *diversion* and doesn't help him. Somehow Comm. Q got his hands on a Mar. 23, 1999 email between Richard Steffens, who is staff director of the Senate Insurance Committee, and Anne Mitchell, who was then chief consultant to the Joint Legislative Task Force on Govt. Oversight. She now works for the Assembly Speaker...

...Steffens writes Mitchell: *Finally, a very hot tip... Quackenbush is keeping settlement agreements so secretive that DOI (Dept. of Insurance) attorneys who worked on the cases don't know the outcomes. The AG was not involved in the Life Insurance settlement which was for \$900,000. I'll draft a letter/the first salvo to Quacker on this issue...*

...Mitchell's response to Steffens (in part): *DON'T WRITE A LETTER TO QUACKENBUSH ON ANYTHING. We have to set him up first which should be fairly easy... He is very adept at warding off controversy. If we do not completely ambush him he will slide out of it...*

...Heavy and too sensitive to put in an email. It's another reminder never to put anything like this in writing. But what

is troubling is the fact that these Demo legislative staffers had an inkling that something wasn't right at the DOI a year before Virginia Ellis of the *L.A. Times* broke this story. And it raises a number of questions. Was Sen. Speier in the loop about Steffens' suspicions? If so, why didn't she start probing the DOI back then? And finally, how did Q get that email? Is there a GOP mole inside the Demo staff operation? Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2000: CALIF. INSIDERS LOVE TO GOSSIP ABOUT NEW YORK'S VERY HOT U.S. SENATE RACE.

Editor's note: Don't think for one moment that political insiders from Calif. don't like to talk and speculate about the most widely watched U.S. Senate race in the country – the battle between First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton(D) and now GOP U.S. Rep. Rick Lazio of Long Island. Here is **Calpeek's** update & analysis...

...Calif. is very important to Mrs. Clinton. Of the \$12 million plus she raised through 3/31/00, \$984,138 came from 785 people in Calif. – second to New York both in terms of contributors and dollar amount. And Mrs. Clinton will be returning to Calif. Gov. & Mrs. Gray Davis and the Angelo Tsakopoulos family are hosting a \$500/person event in Sacto on June 7th. And while he was still in the race, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani was even scheduled to do a few fundraisers here in Calif., including one at the home of prominent GOP businesswoman Noel Irwin Hentschel...

...But given his health, martial and Upstate problems, Giuliani's departure from the U.S. Senate race should have surprised no one, least of all the NY GOP establishment, who have now lined up behind the 42-year-old Lazio. He was first elected in 1992 – knocking off incumbent Demo Tom Downey. Lazio is a conservative who has moderated his views. He's pro-choice, but does oppose late term abortions. And he is more pro-Newt Gingrich than he's willing to admit. GOP spin doctors say Lazio is a stronger candidate than Rudy, but others disagree. His big problem, according to **Calpeek** Demo sources, is stature. Not senatorial, too immature...

...New polls show Hillary with a 50% to 31% lead over Lazio. Over the last several months, Mrs. Clinton has become a stronger candidate. She knows that the battleground will be in Upstate NY and Long Island. She's been to all 62 counties, including 57 Upstate counties. While she probably won't carry many of these Upstate counties, she is gaining support and reducing the GOP margin, which is critical...

...Two other factors are in Mrs. Clinton's favor: 1) like Calif., the GOP voting base in NY is in decline. It used to be about 38%, now it's around 30%, while the Demo base is

46%. Despite his problems, Mayor Rudy was a formidable candidate with stature and had lots of appeal to Jewish and Hispanic Demos. Lazio, as a member of the GOP House leadership team (he voted for impeachment), won't get many cross-over Demos. 2) NY is a state with a weak ticket splitting tradition. Since the beginning of direct election of U.S. Senators, the party whose presidential candidate carried NY also won the senate seat up that year. And right now, Demo VP Al Gore holds a 15-20 pt. lead over George W. Bush. Exceptions: 1928 Royal Copeland; 1968 Jacob Javits; and 1992 Al D'Amato...

...FYI: Lazio also may have problems on his home turf on Long Island caused by a voter revolt against the GOP machine in Nassau County, which is still in the midst of a fiscal meltdown. The voter revolt has spread to Suffolk Co., which is Lazio's base. And then there's former GOP U.S. Rep. Joe DiGuardi, who will probably go after the Conservative, Right to Life and Independence Party nominations. If DiGuardi stays in, it hurts Lazio. Stay tuned...

FULL METAL JACKET: ENFORCING THE GUN LAWS.

Editor's note: In last week's story about guns & politics, Calpeek noted that the NRA's continuing theme of enforcing existing gun laws seems to be catching on. A USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll showed 49% of those surveyed wanted the existing laws enforced more strictly vs. 46% who wanted new gun laws. Here's our update on what's being done in Calif. to enforce what's already on the books...

...Calif. is ranked 3rd when it comes to gun laws in a new national survey by The Center on Crime Communities & Culture. Calif. has a 10-day waiting period for a background check; requires registration of handguns; has a fairly good law banning assault weapons; requires trigger locks for weapons; has laws dealing with the private party transfer of weapons; limits handgun sales to 1 per month; requires first time gun buyers to complete a safety training course; and now Calif. bans unsafe, cheaply made handguns. These are the best known gun laws, but there are others as well...

...In terms of enforcement, there are continual complaints that county DAs don't do enough to enforce the existing laws. The DAs say they need more tools. One gun law that is not well enforced, with the exception of the S.F. Co. DA's office, is a law dealing with private party transfers of guns. One can't simply sell your six shooter to a friend. The sale must be made through a licensed gun dealer, complete with the 10-day waiting period, background check/registration and a safety training certificate. And in part to beef up this transfer law, Gov. Davis last year signed AB 491 (Scott). AB 491 increases the penalty to a felony for illegally carry-

ing a handgun if the gun is not registered to the carrier. AB 491 also requires that DAs provide an annual and detailed report on how they deal with these types of violations...

...In terms of what laws could be added, the State Senate passed SB 31 (Peace/Perata) which attempts to once again fix problems with the existing computer handgun registration problems at the Calif. DOJ. In addition, the Senate passed SB 1473 (Ross Johnson) to restore the gun enforcement accountability provisions enacted last year, but wiped out by the passage of Prop. 21 in March. And on the Senate floor is SB 1608 (Jim Brulte) which mandates a study by the Office of Criminal Justice Planning to report on the number of arrests, prosecutions and convictions of persons with previous serious or violent felonies, who again have been arrested and had a gun in their possession. The idea behind this bill is to shine a light on enforcement. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2000: CALIFORNIA INITIATIVE UPDATE.

Editor's note: As of Monday, May 22nd, all of the major initiative campaigns trying to qualify for the Nov. 7, 2000 ballot had turned in their signature petitions. All counties must report by June 29th, which is the deadline for making the November ballot. Here's a brief update...

◆ Son of Prop. 26 – Taxpayers for Accountability & Better Schools submitted the bulk of their signatures on May 22nd. There seems little doubt that the 1.1 million signatures gathered via direct mail and from the street are sufficient in number to qualify. However, time is a factor, especially since county registrars are still in the process of counting 3 other high-profile initiatives (vouchers, fee/tax and drug rehab). Some sources think Son of Prop. 26 will qualify, but not for the November 2000 ballot. The TABS effort had been on the street for less than 1 month. To make the ballot, 670,816 signatures are needed. The Son of Prop. 26 requires a 55% vote to pass a local school bond. In March, Prop. 26 was narrowly defeated, but it only required a 50% threshold vote to pass a local school bond. For more info on this initiative: www.betterschoolsforCA.org.

◆ Contracting Out Initiative – In the past we've called this initiative the "Competitive Bidding Initiative." But that is not an accurate description. If approved in November, this measure will allow state and local public officials to secure engineering, surveying and architectural design services from the private sector – as opposed to the public sector. This is known as contracting out. And for Taxpayers for Fair Competition, backers of this initiative, there was some excellent news: the State Building and Construction Trades Council of Calif. (AFL-CIO), has endorsed the YES side. Prior to this endorsement, the only other major union to back

contracting out was Operating Engineers #3. The council represents about 33% of the AFL-CIO in Calif...

◆ **Opposition to Drug Rehab Initiative** – There is now a formal opposition group to the Substance Abuse & Crime Prevention Act initiative – which has a good shot to qualify for the Nov. 7th ballot. The opposition goes by the name of Californians United Against Drug Abuse (CUADA). The official committee has hired McNally, Temple & Assoc. of Sacto as their lead consultant. It's expected that most of the frontline police & law enforcement organizations will line up on the NO side. FYI: sources tell Calpeek that businessman Alex Spanos (owner of the San Diego Chargers) has given CUADA \$100,000 in seed money...

CAMPAIGN 2000: CALPEEK'S NEW POLITICAL GUIDE
We're working on a new Campaign 2000 Political Guide. It will be published either next week or the week of June 12th. It will include information about Calif.'s political parties, voter registration info, key political websites and some info about the November ballot – presidential candidates, U.S. Senate candidates and some ballot measure info. Calpeek plans to produce its regular Election Guide later in the year, after the initiatives get their numbers. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES.

Editor's note: Here are a few items, political & otherwise, worth noting...

■ **A Very Sad Note: John Jacobs Dies** – The Sacto BEE's political editor/columnist John Jacobs died at 1 a.m., May 24th. He was 49. In his Jan. 9th column, Jacobs announced that his melanoma that he had beaten nearly 6 years ago had returned – internally. It was serious and Jacobs knew it. But despite the chemo and immuno-therapy treatments, Jacobs continued to write his thoughtful political columns. On April 16 he wrote a column about Chuck Quackenbush's problems. Jacobs' last column was published on April 25th. He spent 24 years in journalism and prior to working at the BEE, Jacobs had been with the Washington Post and the S.F. Examiner. He will be missed by his many friends and news media colleagues. Jacobs is survived by his wife Susan and two children. Longtime friend, political consultant Gale Kaufman, is working on establishing an educational fund for the kids. When details are announced, we'll pass them along. R.I.P...

■ **China Trade Bill Wins House Vote** – Despite some very passionate speeches against HR 4444, the bill to give permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to China, was approved May 24th on a 237 to 197 vote. 73 Demos joined with 164 GOPers to give Pres. Bill Clinton a major win. 57

GOPers joined with 138 Demos to vote against the bill. Big winners: from CA, Bob Matsui (D) and David Dreier (R)...

■ **Inland Empire Legislative Caucus** – GOP Senate Leader Jim Brulte and Assemblyman Rod Pacheco (R) are working to revive the Inland Empire Legislative Caucus. It was formed a number of years ago, but went inactive in 1997. If this caucus is reassembled, it would have 4 State Senators and 8 Assemblymembers. While that's small compared to L.A. Co.'s 38, it would be larger than Orange Co.'s 11-member delegation. Inland Empire Caucus would include State Senators Brulte, Kelley, Haynes and Soto; and Assemblymembers Longville, Granlund, Leonard, Pacheco, Thompson, Battin and Olberg. It would also include whoever is elected in the now vacant 61st AD...

■ **Lott Needs a New Mailing List** – The May 12th pitch letter from U.S. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R) said, "It's my honor to inform you that at a recent meeting of my Republican Senate colleagues, your name was placed in nomination to serve as one of the 150 members from the State of Calif. in the exclusive Republican Senatorial Inner-Circle." Yadda, yadda, yadda. The letter was sent to Mr. Arthur Torres – AKA Art Torres, the chair of the CA Demo Party. Wonder who supplied Lott with this mailing list???

COMMUNICATING WITH CALPEEK WITH E-MAIL.

For those inclined to use it, we do have an E-mail address: calpeek@aol.com. We check our E-Mail 4-5 times a week...

CALPEEK'S MARKETPLACE NETWORK

● **Statewide union seeks dedicated political organizer** to help build core member activist base. Location: Southern California. One-year experience required, preferably working for a union. Strong communication skills a must. Competitive salary, excellent benefits. Fax resume to CFA: (916)441-3513.

● **Libertarian Party of Calif. seeks P/T (20 hrs/wk) Administrative Assistant** for L.A. office. Duties include caging, data entry, telephones, filing, assisting Executive Director, other special projects as needed. Bookkeeping, database experience a plus. Fax resume to: (818)782-8488.

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